

RANKING AMERICA'S CITIES

Burlington is more than skiing central—it's also America's best city for men.



The 10 best

- 1 Burlington, VT
- 2 Madison, WI
- 3 Plano, TX
- 4 San Jose, CA
- 5 Boise, ID
- 6 Austin, TX
- 7 Virginia Beach, VA
- 8 Seattle, WA
- 9 Aurora, CO
- 10 Raleigh, NC

The 10 worst

- 91 Kansas City, MO
- 92 Toledo, OH
- 93 Tulsa, OK
- 94 Cleveland, OH
- 95 Jackson, MS
- 96 St. Louis, MO
- 97 Detroit, MI
- 98 Philadelphia, PA
- 99 Burlington, AL
- 100 Memphis, TN

For more on the sources for our statistics and to see additional city rankings, go to MensHealth.com/metrogrades.

#2 Madison, WI

Score points for your heart NBA lockout or not, nets are swishing in Madison, where folks shoot hoops more often than in 98 of the 100 cities we ranked. "The winters are so bad that people would rather play basketball at the gym than football in the snow," says Lamont Paris, an assistant coach of the men's basketball team at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. As a vigorous, aerobic activity, basketball can improve your heart health, which may help explain Madison's impressively low rate of men keeling over from coronaries. To maximize your pickup payoff, "don't just hang out on one end of the floor," says Paris. "Sprint beyond the midcourt line with every quick change of possession. You're varying speed and direction, with explosive bursts and short rest periods. Basketball is essentially interval training."

#3 Plano, TX

Hit the ground running Plano's motto should be "Happy Trails," because it's home to some of the country's most avid joggers, cyclists, and mountain bikers. "We have about 65 miles of trails, many of which are interconnected," says Renée Jordan, the city's trail system planner. "Plus, Plano has sidewalks everywhere, so people can jog directly to the trails." Follow the Plano prescription for fitness, and your mind and body will thank you—a Utah State University study found that outdoor runners felt more revitalized than gym-bound runners. No access to trails? Buy a treadmill with a Passport media player, such as the AFG 7.1AT treadmill (\$2,000, afgfitness.com). The device communicates wirelessly with your TV to match outdoor video footage with your speed.

#4 San Jose, CA

Talk your way out of trouble It's not just the weather here that's sunny. Rates of sadness and hopelessness are exceptionally low in this Silicon Valley city, according to CDC data. "People here are highly involved in the tech industry. It's a progressive area," says Brian Sackett, Ph.D., a private-practice psychologist in San Jose. "As a result, there isn't as great a stigma attached to seeing a therapist." If you're

Community gardens mean fewer couch potatoes in Boise.



feeling blue but hate the idea of therapy, think about it this way: "Something you care about—your marriage, your job—is threatened when you're depressed," he says. "Initially, therapy doesn't have to be something you do for yourself." Set an external goal, rather than an emotional one, for your first few sessions.

#5 Boise, ID

Grow your own Harvard researchers recently indicted potatoes as one of the worst foods for your waistline. So how can the Spud State's capital be a hot spot

for healthy men? "We have a lot of community gardens," says Nancy Rush, R.D., of Idaho's Central District Health Department. And surprisingly, potatoes aren't Boise residents' primary crop. "People mostly grow greens, squash, broccoli, and lots of tomatoes," she says. "With community gardens, you not only gain access to fresh food, but you also get exercise when you plant, harvest, and weed. Plus, you enjoy the social benefits of working together." Ready to stake out a plot? Search for a garden in your city at communitygarden.org.

THE BEST & WORST CITIES FOR MEN 2012

OUR ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT CARD REVEALS WHICH CITY RANKS AS AMERICA'S TOP METROPOLIS FOR MEN. HOW DOES YOUR HOMETOWN STACK UP?

Burlington, Vermont, has four colleges packed into 10 square miles. Naturally, this means that a certain percentage of the population follows a strict 40-30-30 diet (caffeine, sugar, trans fats) and considers keg stands a core-building workout. But you should never judge a city by its juvenile delinquents. The fact is, most of the men in Burlington could teach a graduate course in healthy living—they're *that* healthy. And they're also that fit and happy. We know, because we evaluated 100 cities in 35 categories ranging from exercise, employment, and air quality to heart disease, diabetes, and depression, using sources such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the CDC, and the FBI. After weeks of mind-numbing math, we hit "calculate" in the last column of our Excel spreadsheet and determined our final grades for the Class of 2012. Now comes your assignment: Take a little of what makes the top five thrive and apply it to your own life. BY LAURA ROBERSON • RESEARCH BY JACLYN COLLETTI

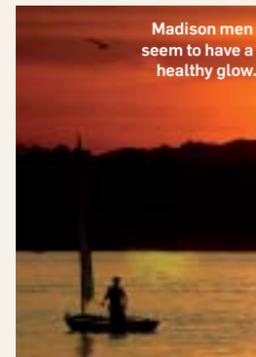
Clockwise from left: Johannes Kraemer/Tetra Images/Corbis, David Fratini/Newscom, courtesy of Plano Parks and Recreation, Steve Apple/AP Images

#1 Burlington, VT

Fight disease head-on Burlington may be the birthplace of Ben & Jerry's, but it's hardly a town of chubby hubbies. "The obesity epidemic, which has been linked to heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, hasn't hit as badly here," says James Vecchio, M.D., a professor of medicine at the University of Vermont. "We have

health-conscious patients." This translates into men who know their health screening options the way other guys know their fantasy football stats. Still, disease prevention is a two-way street in this city. "Our major medical center recently introduced electronic medical records, which will hopefully further boost rates of preventive care," says Dr. Vecchio. Doctors will soon be able to program preventive-care reminders into patients' e-records so they never miss screenings. Ask your M.D. about switching to digital records, and then download the MyChart app, which lets you use your smartphone to view your medical file and any screening reminders.

Madison men seem to have a healthy glow.



Plano is the wheel deal, with more cyclists than any other city.